Proposal for a quality framework on early childhood education and care (ECEC)

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Structure of the Key Principles for a Quality Framework

**Image and Voice of the Child**

- **Access:** available, affordable for all; encourages participation and strengthens inclusion; embraces diversity

- **Curriculum:** holistic; flexible; requires collaboration; improved/revised regularly

- **Governance and funding:** coordinated legislation and funding; responsibilities clear; collaboration encouraged; progress towards universal legal entitlement

- **Evaluation and Monitoring:** regular and transparent; in the best interest of the child; effective use for policy development

- **Workforce:** professional and well-qualified; strong leadership; supportive working conditions

- **Process Quality**

- **Competent System**

**Partnership**
**Main topics of Key data**

**ACCESS**
- Guarantee to an affordable place (enough provision)

**QUALITY**
- **WORKFORCE**
  - Initial training
  - CPD
  - Career
- **EDUCATIONAL GUIDELINES**
  - Holistic approach
  - Targeted support

**FUNDING**
- Free provision, targeted subsidies

**GOVERNANCE**
- Policy coordination

**MONITORING, EVALUATION**

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**GREATEST BENEFITS FOR ALL CHILDREN**

Intensive verbal interactions
Cognitive stimulation
Encouraging climate, safe environment
Socialisation, physical development
Participation rates of children under the age of 3 in ECEC, by hours per week, 2011

33%
Strong social gradient in the use of formal childcare for children aged 0-2

EU27

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<th>Household type</th>
<th>Education level of the father</th>
<th>Education level of the mother</th>
<th>Household work intensity</th>
<th>Mother working status occupation</th>
<th>Income quintile</th>
<th>Risk of poverty or social exclusion</th>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>LOW</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>LOW</td>
<td>employed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Not at risk</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 adults, 3+ cd</td>
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<td>High</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>Poorest</td>
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<td>richest</td>
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% of children aged 0-2
Affordability
Availability

Free ECEC provision, by age and weekly hours, 2012/13

Four possible approaches:
- Place guarantee
- 19 hours or less
- 20-39 hours or less
- 40 hours or more

Free ECEC
- EL, IT, LV, LT, RO, SK

Place guaranteed
- BE, BG, CZ, IE, EL, ES, FR, CY, LV, LU, HU, MT, AT, PL, PT, RO, FI, SE, UK, LI, CH

DK, DE, EE, SI, FI, SE, NO
Demand and supply of places in publicly subsidised centre-based ECEC settings, 2012/13

Children under 3

3 years and older children

Demand is higher than supply
Supply meets demand
No data

Framework proposal on access to ECEC

• Provision that is available and affordable to all families and their children
• Provision that encourages participation, strengthens social inclusion and embraces diversity

• rights-based, cost, opening hours, geography, outreach, co-construction (usefulness and comprehensibility),
Staff with a minimum 3 years of ISCED 6 in education, in centre-based ECEC settings, 2014/15

For both younger and older children

Only for older children

No staff with min 3 years ISCED 6 in education

Source: Eurydice, forthcoming.
Workforce

- The **younger the children the lower the minimum qualification requirements** for staff

- **Continuous professional development is professional duty** for education and care staff in settings for younger children in 2/3 of European countries

- **Childminders** – min. level of qualification is required in 1/3 ed. systems with home based provision, in half only special course is needed
Framework proposal on ECEC workforce

• Well qualified staff whose initial and continuing training enables them to fulfil their professional role
• Supportive working conditions, including professional leadership, which creates opportunities for observation, reflection, planning, teamwork and cooperation with parents

• theory and practice, needs-based training, flexible career pathways, networks
Educational guidelines in center-based ECEC, 2014/15

Source: Eurydice, forthcoming.
Educational guidelines

- **Children Over 3 years**
  - literacy
  - numerical and logical reasoning
  - adaptation to school life

- **SOME countries**
  - understanding of the world
  - health education
  - physical development
  - artistic skills

- **ALL countries**
  - personal development
  - emotional and social development
  - language and communication

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**Learning objectives**

**Learning approaches**

- balance between adult-led and children-initiated activities
- free play
Framework proposal on ECEC curriculum

• A curriculum based on **pedagogic goals, values and approaches** which enable children to reach their **full potential** in a **holistic** way.
• A curriculum which requires **staff to collaborate** with children, colleagues and parents and to **reflect on their own practice**.

• **traditions, based on child development, sense of identity and belonging, co-construction**
Monitoring and evaluation

- Each country has a monitoring system in place but the focus is mainly on structural quality, on compliance with rules. For older children it is more complex.
- Monitoring and evaluation often happens under different bodies at central, regional and local level.
- Often accreditation is done by a different body.
• Monitoring and evaluating produces information at the relevant local, regional and/or national level to support continuing improvements in the quality of policy and practice
• Monitoring and evaluation which is in the best interest of the child

• what, how, for which purpose
ECEC systems

'Childcare' (under 3 years)
- Ministry responsible for health, welfare or family affairs
- No educational guidelines
- Care staff (upper secondary education)
- Low staff/child ratios
- No place guarantee

'Early childhood education' (3 years and older)
- Ministry of education
- Educational guidelines
- Educational staff with tertiary degrees
- High staff/child ratios
- Place guaranteed

'Early childhood education and care' (0/1-6/7 years)
- Ministry of education
- Educational guidelines
- Educational staff with tertiary degrees
- Low/medium staff/child ratios
- Place guaranteed
Organisation of centre-based ECEC, 2012/13

Unitary settings
0/1 to 6/7 years
with or without pre-primary classes

Separate settings for
Under 3 years
3 years and more

Framework proposal on ECEC governance and funding

- **Stakeholders** in the ECEC system have **clear and shared understanding** of their **role and responsibilities**, and know that they are expected to **collaborate** with partner organisations.

- **Legislation, regulation and/or funding** supports progress towards a **universal legal entitlement** to publicly subsidised or funded ECEC, and progress is regularly reported to all stakeholders.

- **Coherent frameworks, public commitment, targeted vs. universal**
Next steps

– Identifying specific obstacles and challenges within **national contexts**
– Deepening **research, data** collection and analysis
– Supporting search for efficient **solutions through Erasmus+** (experimentation, piloting, upscaling)
– Supporting Member States through the **European Semester, ESF and ERDF**
– **Cross-sectoral cooperation** (EMPL, JUST)
Thank you for your attention.